



Teachers'

Choices

2013



Logo illustration © by Chris Van Allsburg

What Is the Teachers' Choices Project?

The Teachers' Choices logo that Chris Van Allsburg created (see below)

illuminates the idea that good books reach out and tap us on the shoulder to get our attention. Each year since 1989, the International Reading Association's Teachers' Choices project has identified outstanding trade books, published for children and adolescents, that teachers find exceptional for curriculum use. Parents, also, will find here books good for reading aloud and for help answering questions prompted by tours to a farm, aquarium, or museum or by other shared family activities such as television viewing.

See
page 7 for the
Teachers' Choices
2013 Reading List
bookmark!

Primary Readers

Grades K-2, Ages 5-8

A Leaf Can Be...

Laura Purdie Salas. Ill. Violeta Dabija. Lerner.

This simple, rhyming text shows readers the many things a leaf can be. Through short noun/verb couplets, young readers have the chance to play with words and build an understanding that leaves are more than tree decorators.

And Then It's Spring

Julie Fogliano. Ill. Erin E. Stead. Macmillan.

It is hard to believe that the cold, brown earth will turn green again. When a young boy plants a seed and waits for it to grow, he holds the belief alive. The rain comes, the world turns green, *and then it's spring*.

Body Actions

Shelley Rotner. Ill. Shelley Rotner and David A. White. Holiday House.

Photographs with superimposed drawings combine with simple textual explanations to help young readers take an inside look at the body systems and the five senses. Endnotes provide more information for the teacher or advanced reader.

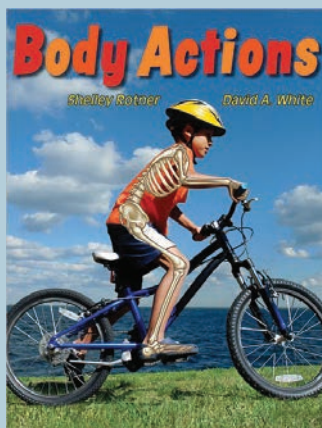
Chopsticks

Amy Krouse Rosenthal. Ill. Scott Magoon. Disney/Hyperion.

Effective use of chopsticks requires two, which is why one chopstick stays behind with his broken counterpart. When the broken part decides that the other shouldn't sit around, Chopstick ventures out. Although he keeps busy, he realizes that things are always better with his friend.



From *A Leaf Can Be...* by Laura Purdie Salas. Ill. Violeta Dabija. Lerner.



From *Body Actions* by Shelley Rotner. Ill. Shelley Rotner and David A. White. Holiday House.



From *Chopsticks* by Amy Krouse Rosenthal. Ill. Scott Magoon. Disney/Hyperion.

Creepy Carrots!

Aaron Reynolds. Ill. Peter Brown. Simon & Schuster.

Jasper Rabbit loves carrots and always stops at Crakenhopper Field to get a snack. Soon, he thinks that the carrots are following him, and he builds a fence to keep them in their field. He realizes that he also built a fence to keep himself out, doing the carrots an unexpected favor.

Green

Laura Vaccaro Seeger. Macmillan.

This concept book has outstanding illustrations that show readers the many variations of green. Through the use of die-cut pages, readers learn that green shows up in many shades, from forest to lime, and the objects that represent those are presented throughout the text.

How Many Jelly Beans? A Giant Book of Giant Numbers!

Andrea Menotti. Ill. Yancey Labat. Chronicle.

If you could have as many jelly beans as you wanted, how many would you choose? That question is this book's premise, which begins having readers count by 25s but quickly moves to larger numbers. This illustrations and foldouts provide effective visuals.

Otto the Book Bear

Katie Cleminson. Disney/Hyperion.

When no one is reading Otto's book, he can wander out of it to explore. Otto struggles to find a welcoming place but then stumbles into the library. There he finds other book animals to explore with before returning to his own pages.

Plant a Little Seed

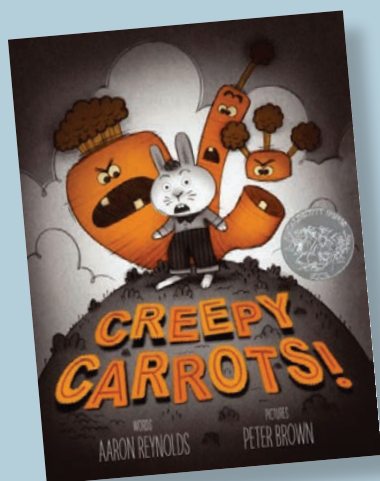
Bonnie Christensen. Macmillan.

This book reviews for young children the growing season for seeds. The characters plant their seeds each spring, water them, and then wait. As they are waiting, readers see bees, butterflies, and the rain, as the plants stretch closer to the sky each day.

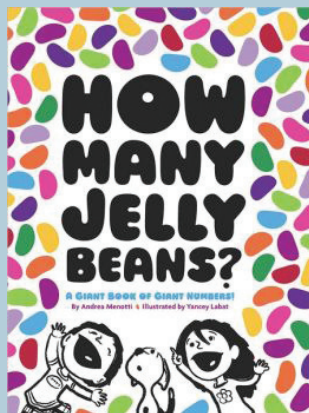
Rocket Writes a Story

Tad Hills. Random House.

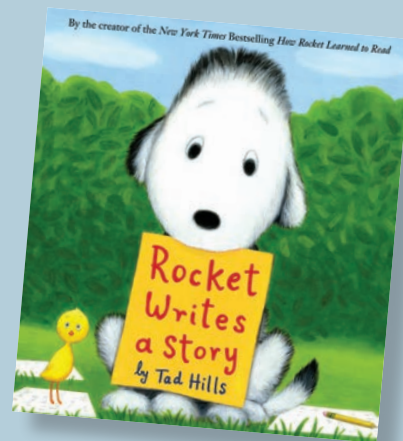
Since Rocket learned to read, he has been collecting words. Rocket wants to do something with them, so he decides to write a story. Rocket needs a lot of thinking and observing time, but he eventually writes a story and makes a friend.



From *Creepy Carrots!* by Aaron Reynolds. Ill. Peter Brown. Simon & Schuster.



From *How Many Jelly Beans? A Giant Book of Giant Numbers!* by Andrea Menotti. Ill. Yancey Labat. Chronicle.



From *Rocket Writes a Story* by Tad Hills. Random House.

Intermediate Readers

Grades 3-5, Ages 8-11

The Beetle Book

Steve Jenkins. Houghton Mifflin.

Did you know that one of every four plants or animals on earth is a beetle? This book explores the life cycle and habitats of beetles from around the world. Detailed text provides facts while cut-paper and torn-paper collages provide visual interest.

The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind

William Kamkwamba and Bryan Mealer. Ill. Elizabeth Zunon. Penguin.

Fourteen-year-old William Kamkwamba was determined to help his Malawi village recover from a severe drought that had ravaged the food supply. By reading books and using junk parts, he constructed a windmill to harness the wind and make electricity.

Brothers at Bat: The True Story of an Amazing All-Brother Baseball Team

Audrey Vernick. Ill. Steven Salerno. Clarion.

The Acerra family had 16 children, including 12 baseball-playing brothers. In the 1930s, the boys formed their own semiprofessional team and became the longest playing all-brother baseball team in history.

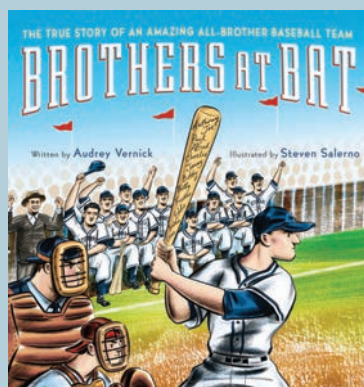
Dogs on Duty: Soldiers' Best Friends on the Battlefield and Beyond

Dorothy Hinshaw Patent. Bloomsbury Walker.

Military Working Dogs have served alongside soldiers on the battlefield since ancient times. How these dogs are trained and the vital roles they play in all branches of military service are highlighted through text and stunning photographs.



From *The Beetle Book* by Steve Jenkins. Houghton Mifflin.



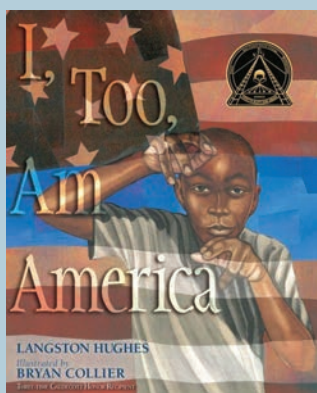
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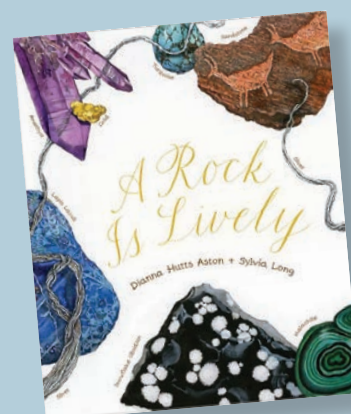
From *Dogs on Duty: Soldiers' Best Friends on the Battlefield and Beyond* by Dorothy Hinshaw Patent. Bloomsbury Walker.



From *Each Kindness* by Jacqueline Woodson. Ill. E.B. Lewis. Penguin.



From *I, Too, Am America* by Langston Hughes. Ill. Bryan Collier. Simon & Schuster.



From *A Rock Is Lively* by Dianna Hutts Aston. Ill. Sylvia Long. Chronicle.

Each Kindness

Jacqueline Woodson. Ill. E.B. Lewis. Penguin.

When a newcomer is shunned by the popular girls, their teacher shows them how small acts of kindness can change the world. It is too late to undo the harm they have caused, but these students—and yours—will take this antibullying message to heart.

I, Too, Am America

Langston Hughes. Ill. Bryan Collier. Simon & Schuster.

Collier showcases the history of the Pullman Porters by lending his artistic interpretation to the famous Langston Hughes poem. Endnotes provide additional information about the contributions of these noble servants.

Rachel Carson and Her Book That Changed the World

Laurie Lawlor. Ill. Laura Beingesser. Holiday House.

Rachel Carson was an ordinary child who grew up to be a pioneer environmentalist. This biography shows that anyone can make a difference. A detailed epilogue explains more about the lasting impact of her book, *Silent Spring*.

A Rock Is Lively

Dianna Hutts Aston. Ill. Sylvia Long. Chronicle.

Vivid illustrations combine with poetic text to help readers see inside the fascinating world of geology. Detailed explanations extend students' understanding of the form and function of rocks and minerals.

A Strange Place to Call Home: The World's Most Dangerous Habitats & the Animals That Call Them Home

Marilyn Singer. Ill. Ed Young. Chronicle.

Through a variety of poetic forms and collage illustrations, readers will discover 14 creatures that thrive in seemingly uninhabitable locations. Endnotes provide more details about each creature, and explanations of the different types of poems will guide aspiring writers.

Survival at 120 Above

Debbie S. Miller. Ill. Jon Van Zyle. Bloomsbury Walker.

Imagine a world where the daily temperature swings as much as 75 degrees and animals must survive years of drought with little relief. Life in Australia's Simpson Desert is showcased. A glossary of terms supplements the text and illustrations.

Advanced Readers

Grades 6-8, Ages 11-14

Buried Alive! How 33 Miners Survived 69 Days Deep Under the Chilean Desert

Elaine Scott. Clarion.

Photographs, diagrams, and text tell the heartwrenching story of 33 men who were trapped 2,000 feet underground in a desert mine while the world watched and waited. Additional resources provide suggestions for further exploration.

Fire in the Streets

Kekla Magoon. Simon & Schuster.

Chicago in 1968 is a difficult time to be a 14-year-old girl, especially if you hope to join the Black Panthers like your older brother. Maxie finds her identity in spite of the chaos, violence, and injustice that surround her.

Glory Be

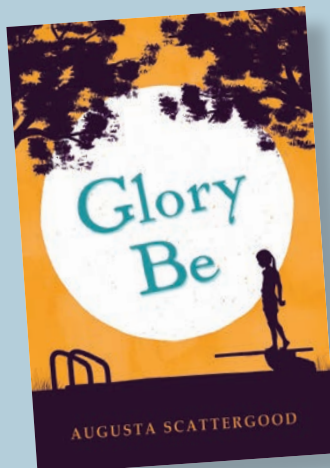
Augusta Scattergood. Scholastic.

Gloriana Hemphill always celebrates her Fourth of July birthday at the community pool, but 1964 brings changes that she had not anticipated. Her hometown of Hanging Moss, Mississippi, is in turmoil, and Glory must negotiate her way through changing relationships with family and friends.

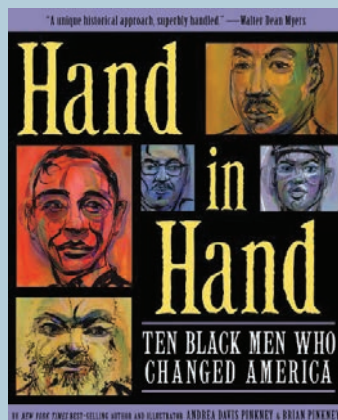
Hand in Hand: Ten Black Men Who Changed America

Andrea Davis Pinkney. Ill. Brian Pinkney. Disney/Hyperion.

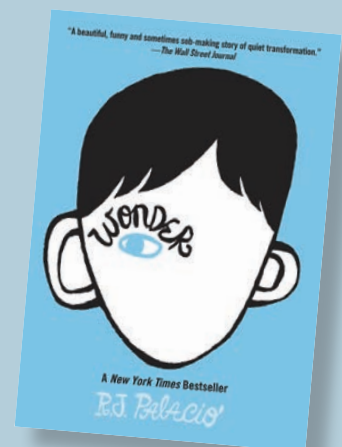
This biography profiles the lives of 10 brave men from different eras of American history. Readers will discover that each of these men left an indelible legacy and that courage and determination can turn ordinary citizens into heroes.



From *Glory Be* by Augusta Scattergood. Scholastic.



From *Hand in Hand: Ten Black Men Who Changed America* by Andrea Davis Pinkney. Ill. Brian Pinkney. Disney/Hyperion.



From *Wonder* by R.J. Palacio. Random House.

Lincoln's Last Days: The Shocking Assassination That Changed America Forever

Bill O'Reilly and Dwight Jon Zimmerman. Henry Holt.

This adaptation of the adult book *Killing Lincoln* is filled with period photographs, diagrams, and maps detailing the event that changed the course of American history. The back matter provides additional facts, resources, timelines, and websites.

The Lions of Little Rock

Kristin Levine. G.P. Putnam.

A first-person narrator helps readers understand life in Little Rock, Arkansas, in 1958, one year after the integration of Central High School. Twelve-year-old Marlee struggles to understand the changes in her family and her community, especially after her new friend is removed from school.

Somebody, Please Tell Me Who I Am

Harry Mazer and Peter Lerangis. Simon & Schuster.

Everyone is surprised when the popular Ben joins the Army right after high school. His family and friends are even more shocked when they have to deal with the consequences when he returns home after suffering a traumatic brain injury.

Steve Jobs: Thinking Differently

Patricia Lakin. Simon & Schuster.

Everyone knows that Steve Jobs was an entrepreneur and a visionary. This book discusses Jobs's triumphs, but it also lets us see his human side. Readers are reminded that people who dare to dream can change the world.

Titanic: Voices From the Disaster

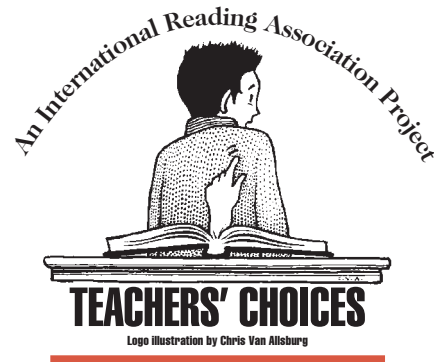
Deborah Hopkinson. Scholastic.

Archival photographs, telegrams, letters, and first-person accounts from passengers, witnesses, and crew members provide multiple perspectives on the sinking of the *Titanic*. Nearly 50 pages of endnotes provide additional information and suggestions for further reading.

Wonder

R.J. Palacio. Random House.

Auggie is not like most kids his age, though he desperately wants to be. A severe facial deformity has kept him out of school until fifth grade. A shifting narrator helps readers imagine what it is like to be Auggie or one of his friends or family members.



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For over 50 years, the International Reading Association has been the trusted provider of ongoing professional development for teachers. IRA is committed to advancing worldwide literacy by improving reading instruction, disseminating research and information about reading, and encouraging the lifetime reading habit. Additional information about IRA can be found at www.reading.org.

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More About Teachers' Choices

Thank you to the 2012–2013 IRA Teachers' Choices Committee and review teams. The committee members were Joyce Gulley (cochair) and April Wulber (cochair). Team Leaders in the field test were

- Belinda Louie and Kim Fairbanks (trainee)—Area 1
- Pam Ryan, Rebecca Stone, and Tammy Everett (trainee)—Area 2
- Joan Kindig—Area 3
- Jane Dewailly—Area 4
- Janet Shaw and Susan Thompson-White—Area 5

For more information on the Teachers' Choices list or to learn how to become involved visit www.reading.org/resources/booklists/teacherschoices.aspx

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